

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office action dated January 26, 2005, applicant has amended the claims to overcome the various rejections.

Claims 1, 3-9, 15-16, and 18-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,638,565 to Pekar in view of U.S. Patent 5,740,573 to Boyd. As amended herein, the claims are patentable over these references.

As previously amended, claim 1 required an inflatable compartment with
“a strip extending from the first layer to the second layer such that the strip defines **substantially straight, vertically extending sides** defining a height of the first inflatable compartment”.

In response, the Examiner cited Boyd for “a strip 25 extending from a first layer to a second layer such that the strip defines straight, vertically extending sides defining a height of the first inflatable compartment 11.”

It is respectfully submitted that strip 25 in Boyd is not a part of the first inflatable compartment as required by the claims. Instead, strip 25 in Boyd is a covering that holds air mattresses 13 and 15 in place with respect to each other. This is clear from the following passage from Boyd:

“One or more **vents 27** disposed in side panel 25 **allow air to flow in and out** of the air mattress **without any change in the inflation of the air mattresses** or of the foundation.” Col. 2, lines 24-36.

This passage illustrates that strip 25 in Boyd is merely a cover—not an integral portion of one of the air mattresses.

To highlight this difference, claim 1 is amended herewith to further provide that “said strip forming an air-impervious wall of the first inflatable compartment.” This amendment is fully consistent with the disclosure of the present application which provides that compartment 13 is inflatable, and vinyl strip 19 forms the sides of the inflatable compartment. See, paragraph 21 of the present application (published as US 2002/0138910). Vinyl strip 19 is, of course, the strip defining the substantially straight, vertically extending sides of the first inflatable compartment.

Note that the Boyd reference specifically requires that the strip 25 be vented by vents 27. Thus, the reference cannot meet the present limitation.

For all these reasons, along those discussed in the previous amendment, claim 1 is allowable. The combination suggested by the Examiner, even if motivated by the art, does not result in the presently claimed invention. Claim 1 is allowable for all these reasons. Claims 3-9 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons as that claim (as well as the reasons set forth in the previous amendment).

Claim 15 is an independent claim similar to claim 1. The Examiner has cited Boyd against this claim for the same reason it was cited against claim 1. Claim 15 is amended herewith to include the requirement that the strip is air-impervious. (It is believed that this limitation was inherent in the previous language that required that the strip defined sides of the “inflatable compartment”, but in any event that requirement is explicit now.) Claim 15 is therefore allowable for the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for the reasons discussed in the previous amendment. Claim 16, 18 and 19 depend from claim 15 and are allowable therewith.

Therefore, for all these reasons, claims 1, 3-9, 15-16, and 18-19 are allowable over Pekar in view of Boyd.

Claims 10 and 20 are rejected over Pekar in view of Boyd, further in view of U.S. Patent 6,332,760 to Chung. Chung is cited for the use of a pump. Claim 10 relates back to claim 1 and is allowable for the same reasons as that claim. Claim 20 depends from claim 15 and is allowable therewith. Chung does not add the straight side-wall air-impervious feature required by the present claims.

Claims 11-14 are rejected over Pekar in view of Boyd, further in view of U.S. Patent 2,604,641 to Reed. Claim 11 is an independent claim similar to claim 1 in that it requires a first inflatable compartment with sides formed by a substantially straight, vertically extending strip, which strip is air-impervious. None of the references show this feature. Reed is cited, inter alia, for the provision of a plurality of ribs.

As discussed in the previous amendment, claim 11 like claim 1, includes the requirement that the first inflatable compartment have “substantially straight, vertically extending” sides. As discussed above, this feature is absent from this art. Moreover, claim 11 provides that the “first and second inflatable compartments [have] substantially different heights”. This is similar to the requirement of claim 1 that the height of the first compartment is substantially more than the height of the second compartment. None of the references show this. The compartments in Reed, like those in Pekar, are all substantially the same height. Moreover, combining the vented strip 25 of Boyd with these references does not result in the air-impervious wall required by claim 11.

For all these reasons, claim 11 is allowable over this art. Claims 12-14 depend from claim 11 and are allowable for the same reasons as that claim.

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Amendment dated June 26, 2005
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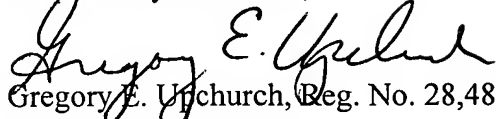
In view of the above, all the rejections have been successfully overcome.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required by this paper to Deposit Account No. 08-3460.

Applicants respectfully request that a Notice of Allowance of claims 1, 3-16 and 18-20 (all the claims pending in this case) be issued.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gregory E. Upchurch", is written over the typed name.

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